

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 NEAE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00

USIE-00 AF-08 IO-13 SSM-05 SAB-01 SAM-01 ACDA-10

CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 INR-07 LAB-04 NSAE-00 SIL-01

DHA-02 SCCT-01 /083 W

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O R 061502Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8439

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

USINT BAGHDAD

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

USMISSION USUN

USIA WASHDC

DIA WASHDC

UNCLAS DAMASCUS 4325

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: FPOR, SY, LE

SUBJECT: SYRIAN MEDIA REPORTS PRAISE OF FIRST SOFAR RECONCILIATION
MEETING AND CRITICISM OF PALESTINIAN ATTEMPTS TO CREATE
PROBLEMS IN SYRIA

1. JULY 6 SYRIAN PRESS BANNERED: "ESCALATION OF FIERCE
FIGHTING IN LEBANON POSTPONES SOFAR CONFERENCE. TRIPARTITE
COMMITTEE DISCUSSES (WAYS TO) CONFINE ESCALATION OF FIGHTING
AND TO RESUME MEETINGS IN SOFAR TO REACH CEASEFIRE AGREEMENT."
PRESS NOTED MEETING OF ARAB LEAGUE SEC GEN RIAD AND TRIPARTITE
COMMITTEE IN DAMASCUS EVENING JULY 5 TO DISCUSS EFFORTS TO
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RESUME SOFAR MEETINGS. BAHRAIN FOMIN PRAISED FIRST SOFAR

MEETING (JULY 4) AS "SIGNIFICANT TURNING POINT" IN COMMITTEE'S EFFORTS TO RESTORE SECURITY TO LEBANON BY BRINGING TOGETHER AT CONFERENCE TABLE ALL WARRING PARTIES. PRESS REPORTED DENIAL FROM COMMAND OF ARAB SECURITY FORCES THAT SUDANESE AND LIBYAN FORCES HAD CLASHED. ACCORDING TO MEDIA, ASAD MET JULY 5 WITH ARAB LABOR DELEGATION TO EXPLAIN SYRIAN VIEW OF LEBANESE CRISIS AND SYRIAN DETERMINATION TO CONTINUE SUPPORTING PALESTINIAN CAUSE.

2. SYRIAN COLUMNISTS HAVE CONTINUED TO CRITICIZE JUMBLATT AND SOME PALESTINIAN ELEMENTS AND TO DENY SYRIAN INVOLVEMENT IN LEBANESE FIGHTING. ONE COLUMNIST CITED STATEMENTS BY PFLP LEADER HABASH AND FATAH NUMBER TWO SALAH KHALAF THREATENING TO STIR UP PROBLEMS IN SYRIA AND ASKED RHETORICALLY, "WHAT MORE COULD AMERICA DESIRE?" AL-BAATH POLITICAL EDITOR WROTE THAT FATAH AND ITS ALLIES CLAIMING SYRIA SHELLING FATAH UNITS AND EMPHASIZED THAT "THESE ALLEGATIONS ARE TOTALLY ROUNDLESS. THERE HAS BEEN NO FIGHTING BETWEEN OUR FORCES AND ANY SIDE IN LEBANON." BAATH ADDED CHARGES THAT LEBANESE LIVING IN AREAS UNDER FATH DOMINATION INDIGNANT AGAINST FATAH "TERRORISM."
MURPHY

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, CIVIL DISORDERS, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 06 JUL 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976DAMASC04325
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760260-0089
From: DAMASCUS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760789/aaaadaei.tel
Line Count: 83
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: schwenja
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 25 FEB 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <25 FEB 2004 by ThomasVJ>; APPROVED <06 AUG 2004 by schwenja>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SYRIAN MEDIA REPORTS PRAISE OF FIRST SOFAR RECONCILIATION MEETING AND CRITICISM OF PALESTINIAN ATTEMPTS TO
CREATE
TAGS: PFOR, SY, LE
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006